

Application No.: 10/516,461Docket No.: 4590-353REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application in view of the following remarks is respectfully requested. This Amendment should be entered under Rule 116 as it raises no new issues, does not amend the claims and places the application in better condition for appeal.

Claims 1-24 remain pending in the application.

Claims 1-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over [USPUB 2002/0196549] to Randall et al. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

In Randall, the Figures 5a, 5b et 5c do not disclose a collimation means common to the input guide 551, to the return means and to the second output guide 552. In fact, the three figures help to understand the same embodiment. Figure 5a is an isometric view and figures 5b and 5c are plan views of the x-z and y-z planes (see paragraph 0084 on page 6). In this embodiment there are two collimation means 505 and 506. The means 505 collimate the light ray emanating from the first fiber tube 551 (see paragraph 0084 on page 7 line 6 and 7). The second means 506 collimates rays issued from the optical beam segment 501g toward the second optical fiber tube 552. The two collimation means 505 and 506 are distinct. In figure 5c the collimation means 506 is hidden by collimation means 505.

In the present invention there is only one collimation means which, in the embodiment of Figure 5c, would have been common to the input guide 551 and to the output guide 552.

In Figure 1 of Randall, there is only one optical fiber 104 which is used as an input and output guide. This common guide involves one collimation means 103.

In conclusion, in Randall, in a first embodiment (Fig 1, 4 and 6), one guide for input and output involves, one collimation means and in a second embodiment (Fig 5), two guides, (one for input and another for output) involve two collimation means. And in present invention, there are

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two guides and only one collimation means common to the two guides. For at least this reason, claim 1 is allowable over Randall. Claims 2-24 are dependent on claim 1 and recite additional important limitations and should be allowable along with claim 1 as well as on their own merits.

All objections and rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the present application should be in condition for allowance and a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned, Applicant's attorney of record, to facilitate advancement of the present application.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 07-1337 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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